Back in time

BIGGA National Championship Special

Back in time looks back at cuttings of greenkeeping news from days gone-by. 2012 is a landmark year, being the centenary of Greenkeeping Associations, as well as 25 years since BIGGA was formed. Each month we usually look back at the current month, but in a different year, from over the last competition’s longevity…

‘back in time’ focuses on the Championship. This month’s century of the BIGGA National Championship. It also marks a quarter of a century of the golfing calendar. Competitors and their wives” enjoying the sunshine in some of the competitors and their

October 1997 was the month of Michael Fish’s notoriously inaccurate statement “there will be no hurricane” - hours before a devastating storm which brought down trees across the UK.

That month’s cover of Greenkeeper International graphically illustrated this, featuring a photograph of a partially flooded course and a large tree lying horizontal close to the green.

Fortunately, the weather abstained for the inaugural event – then called the ‘BIGGA Annual Tournament’ – held at West Lancs Golf Club in Scotland on 8 and 9 October.

This year’s event was held across two venues – Dundonald Links and Kilmarnock Barassie, with David Simpson from Craeff Golf Club earning the title of BIGGA National Champion.

The tournament review stated: “More than seventy greenkeepers turned out over three days to take part over a course kept in fine condition best of all by head greenkeeper Geoff Smith and his staff”.

Black and white images show “some of the competitors and their wives” enjoying the sunshine in front of the clubhouse.

By 1990 the tournament was well-established annually and had already become one of the highlights of the golfing calendar. Competitors backed in “driving, chipping and putting” over three days at Garston Golf Club in East Yorkshire.

The tournament – now called ‘The Hayter Challenge’ – celebrated its 15th birthday at the same venue in 1997, and all attendees complimented Head Greenkeeper David Spurgeon on the outstandingly prepared course.

However, this was totally overshadowed by the tragic news just days later that David had died in a shooting accident on the course.

The turn of the century saw ‘The Charterhouse/Scotts National Championship’ held at the venue for this year’s Open Championship, Lytham St Annes. Emerging triumphant from an extremely challenging course, was Paul Murray-Houghton from Stamford Head in East Sussex.

As you will have seen in the last issue, the club celebrates its 125th anniversary so it should be a particularly special couple of days - keep an eye out for the November issue to find out the winner of the coveted prize.

Do you have any old artifacts from days gone-by? Perhaps your grandad was a greenkeeper and has something stored away in the loft? Maybe an Association tie, or a journal? If so, we would love to hear from you. We are particularly interested in the early part of the last century, but anything you have would be worth considering for future editions of this article.

Survival of the fittest

As you will have seen in the last issue, the club celebrates its 125th anniversary so it should be a particularly special couple of days - keep an eye out for the November issue to find out the winner of the coveted prize.

Please contact us on 01325 838500 or email Elliott Small, BIGGA Past Chairman, elliott.edna@hotmail.co.uk

To apply for 2012

See previous page (57)
Back in time

BIGGA National Championship Special

Back in time looks back at cuttings of greenkeeping news from days gone by. 2012 is a landmark year, being the centenary of Greenkeeping Associations, as well as 25 years since BIGGA was formed. Each month we usually look back at the current month, but in a different year, from over the last competition’s longevity…'

Not only is 2012 a milestone in 1997, and all attendees compli-
cated Head Greenkeeper David Spurden on the outstandingly
course, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota, will be held at Irvine
As you will have seen in the last issue, the club celebrates its
district. I'm looking forward
to going to Scotland next year to

The Golf Course

The BIGGA National Championship 2011
is sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota

Survival of the fittest

Do you have any old artifacts from days gone-by?
Perhaps you grandad was a greenkeeper and has something stored away in the loft? Maybe an Association tie, or a journal? If so we would love to hear from you. We are particularly interested in the early part of the last century, but anything you have would be worth considering for future editions of this article.

Please contact us on 01347 833800 or email Elliott Small, BIGGA Past Chairman, elliott.edmog@hotmail.co.uk

To apply for 2012
See previous page (57)